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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - IRAQ - FORMATION OF NEW
GOVERNMENT AFRICA - DAFUR - NATO INVOLVEMENT LEBANON - SYRIAN
PULLOUT
PARIS - FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2005

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

- [1](#). IRAQ - FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT
- [2](#). AFRICA - DAFUR - NATO INVOLVEMENT
- [3](#). LEBANON - SYRIAN PULLOUT

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

A WIDE VARIETY OF DOMESTIC STORIES ARE REPORTED ON TODAY'S FRONT PAGES, WITH FORMER SOCIALIST PM JOSPIN PROMINENTLY FEATURED AFTER HIS TELEVISED INTERVENTION LAST EVENING IN FAVOR OF THE EU CONSTITUTION. LEFT-OF-CENTER LIBERATION HEADLINES: "JOSPIN: YES TO THE YES" WHILE LEFT-OF-CENTER LE MONDE ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY AFTERNOON: "JOSPIN TO DEFEND THE LEFT'S YES." LE MONDE ALSO CARRIES A FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL BY JEAN-MARIE COLOMBANI WHICH ECHOES HIS "WE ARE ALL AMERICANS" EDITORIAL AFTER THE 9/11 ATTACKS. THIS ONE IS TITLED "WE ARE ALL EUROPEANS." COLOMBANI, LIKE JOSPIN, DEFENDS THE 'YES' VOTE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF EUROPE'S WEIGHT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE: "HISTORY DOES NOT WAIT. TOMORROW, IN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS, WHEN WE WILL NEED TO ESTABLISH UNIVERSAL RULES IN TRADE, CULTURE, THE ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND IMMIGRATION, TO NAME A FEW, BUT ALSO TO DISCUSS WAR AND PEACE AT THE UN, THERE WILL BE THREE OR FOUR HEAVY DUTY PLAYERS AROUND THE TABLE: THE U.S. AND POSSIBLY A UNIT COMPRISED OF LATIN AMERICA, CHINA AND INDIA; AND EUROPE IF IT DECIDES THAT IT WANTS TO. IN WASHINGTON, NEW DELHI AND BEIJING THEY ARE WAITING FOR AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION: TOMORROW, WILL THERE BE A EUROPEAN SITTING AT THE TABLE AMONG THE GREATS?"

CATHOLIC LA CROIX CARRIES A FULL-PAGE INTERVIEW WITH JEREMY RIFKIN ON THE EUROPEAN DREAM, "WHICH IS RADICALLY DIFFERENT FROM THE U.S. DREAM OF INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT. IN EUROPE EMPHASIS IS ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY, REJECTING POVERTY AND EXCLUSION, ON QUALITY OF LIFE., SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND RESPECTING THE PLANET."

IRAQ'S NEWLY-FORMED BUT INCOMPLETE GOVERNMENT IS ONE OF TODAY'S INTERNATIONAL STORIES. LE FIGARO DEVOTES ITS EDITORIAL TO "IRAQ'S SLOWNESS." (SEE PART C) THE SYRIAN PULLOUT FROM LEBANON IS THE SUBJECT OF AN EDITORIAL IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LES ECHOS TITLED "THE LEBANESE PUZZLE" WHICH CONCLUDES: "THE WEST WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LEBANESE RECONSTRUCTION. THE COST WOULD BE MINIMAL BUT THE GAINS IN THE EQUILIBRIUM FOR PEACE WOULD BE GREAT." (SEE PART C)

THE SITUATION IN TOGO IS THE BASIS FOR SEVERAL REPORTS, WHILE LE FIGARO DEVOTES A STORY TO THE WORSENING CONDITIONS IN DAFUR AND NATO'S DESIRE TO INTERVENE. IN HER REPORT ALEXANDRINE BOUILHET NOTES THE CONFLICTING POSITIONS OF THE U.S. AND FRANCE ON A NATO ROLE. (SEE PART C)

SEVERAL REPORTS ARE DEVOTED TO PRESIDENT BUSH'S "LOSS OF GRACE" AFTER THE FIRST ONE HUNDRED DAYS IN OFFICE. FOR LES ECHOS "THE PRESIDENT IS ON THE DEFENSIVE. HIS POPULARITY HAS FALLEN. HE IS FACING DIVIDED REPUBLICANS WHEREAS THE DEMOCRATS ARE UNITED. IF JOHN BOLTON IS NOT CONFIRMED, IT WOULD BE THE FIRST OF HIS NOMINATIONS TO BE REJECTED."

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

IRAQ - FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT

"IRAQ'S SLOWNESS"

PIERRE ROUSSELIN IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO (04/29): "IT TOOK THREE MONTHS FOR THE EXEMPLARY COURAGE OF THE IRAQIS WHO VOTED IN JANUARY TO BEAR FRUIT. AND THE GOVERNMENT IS ONLY A TRANSITION GOVERNMENT. BECAUSE BRINGING TOGETHER THE THREE FACTIONS ON FIVE PORTFOLIOS HAS PROVEN TO BE IMPOSSIBLE. IF THE AMERICANS HAD NOT BANGED ON THE TABLE IT IS FAIR TO SAY THAT THE DISCUSSIONS WOULD STILL BE GOING ON. BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT THE TASK OF FOLDING IN THE SUNNI MINORITY WAS NOT BEEN AN EASY ONE. THE RESULT IS NOT GREAT. THE FACT THAT THE DEFENSE AND OIL MINISTERS COULD NOT BE NAMED PROVES THAT THE MOST DIFFICULT IS STILL AHEAD. MEANWHILE, AHMED CHALABI, THE

PENTAGON'S MAN, MAKES A NOTICEABLE AND STRONG COMEBACK. BUT THE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA COULD BE COMPROMISED, AND THIS IS UNFORTUNATE BECAUSE DURING THIS DELAY THE INSURRECTION CONTINUES WITHOUT WEAKENING. ON THE CONTRARY IT IS ENHANCED BY THE INSTITUTIONAL VACUUM. IF THERE ARE FEWER AMERICAN VICTIMS, IT IS BECAUSE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES ARE TAKING OVER FROM THE COALITION. CIVILIANS CONTINUE TO PAY A HEAVY PRICE IN THE DAILY VIOLENCE. TO EXTRICATE THE COUNTRY FROM CHAOS, THE GOVERNMENT MUST GET TO WORK FAST. TOO MUCH TIME HAS ALREADY BEEN WASTED IN IRAQ."

AFRICA - DARFUR - NATO INVOLVEMENT

"NATO WANTS TO INTERVENE IN DARFUR"
ALEXANDRINE BOUILHET IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LE FIGARO (04/29):
"THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN DARFUR COULD OFFER NATO A HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY TO INTERVENE IN AFRICA. DESPITE FRANCE'S RETICENCE. THE AFRICAN UNION TROOPS DEPLOYED NEED HELP. BUT WHOSE? THE EUROPEAN UNION'S OR NATO'S? ONCE AGAIN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS ARE IN COMPETITION. WITH THE DARFUR TRAGEDY AS A BACKDROP, FRANCE'S STRATEGIC INTERESTS ARE CLASHING AGAINST THOSE OF THE U.S., WHICH IS INCREASINGLY PRESENT IN AFRICA. WASHINGTON IS PUSHING FOR A NATO INTERVENTION IN SUDAN. ROBERT ZOELLICK WAS THE FIRST TO SUGGEST IT. TO WHICH FM BARNIER ANSWERED THAT 'NATO MUST NOT BE THE SHERIFF OF THE WORLD.' IN SPITE OF THE URGENT NEED TO DO SOMETHING, FRANCE PREFERS TO GIVE THE LEAD TO THE EUROPEAN UNION TO RESOLVE THE CRISIS. FRANCE'S LACK OF TRUST IN NATO HAS ELICITED SARCASM ON THE PART OF SOME OF ITS EU PARTNERS. WHILE A FRENCH DIPLOMAT ASKS: 'CAN THE U.S. NOT WORK WITH THE EU WITHOUT GOING THROUGH NATO?' KOFI ANNAN MEANWHILE, IGNORING THE QUARREL BETWEEN NATO AND THE EU, HAS ASKED THE AMERICANS AND THE EUROPEANS TO REACH AN AGREEMENT."

LEBANON - SYRIAN PULLOUT

"THE LEBANESE PUZZLE"
FAVILLA IN RIGHT-OF-CENTER LES ECHOS (04/29): "WHILE WE CAN BUT REJOICE IN THE FACT THAT THE LAST SYRIAN SOLDIER HAS JUST LEFT LEBANON, TWO THINGS CAN STILL DAMPEN OUR ENTHUSIASM. THE FIRST IS THAT THE SYRIANS HAVE LEFT UNDER PROTEST. THEIR DEPARTURE IS DUE TO AN EVOLUTION OF WASHINGTON'S POLICY. BECAUSE THIS PULLOUT IS THE RESULT OF PRESSURE, WE CAN FEAR THAT IT WILL LAST ONLY AS LONG AS WASHINGTON'S PRESSURE CONTINUES. THE SECOND HAS TO DO WITH LEBANESE SOCIETY AND ECONOMY. THE COUNTRY IS WEAK, ECONOMICALLY, AND ITS SOCIETY IS FOUNDED ON RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES. THE QUESTION IS HOW TO MAKE THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THIS PUZZLE WORK OUT, PULLED AS THE PIECES ARE BETWEEN THE SHIITE IRANIAN BIG BROTHER, SOLIDARITY FOR THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE, AND THE MEMORY OF LEBANON AS A MEETING POINT FOR EAST AND WEST? THIS IS THE MAJOR CHALLENGE OF THE LEBANESE ELECTIONS. THE WEST WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO HELP IN THE LEBANESE RECONSTRUCTION. THE COST WOULD BE MINIMAL BUT THE GAINS IN THE EQUILIBRIUM FOR PEACE WOULD BE GREAT."
WOLFF